

The Financial Cost\$ of Tobacco

Not only does tobacco harm the health of tobacco users, but the use of tobacco also costs every single tax-payer in America. Whether from billboards, healthcare offices, or media sources, every American has been advised of the health effects of tobacco use. Even those who pay dollars a day for their tobacco habit, very few people actually know the real costs of tobacco. The following information is provided to help you realize just what the true costs of tobacco really are. We hope that the following information will help you decide to quit your tobacco habit.

National Healthcare Cost\$

- Nationally it costs \$72.7 billion a year to treat smokers who suffer from smoking-related diseases.
- Smoking-related Medicaid costs amount to \$12.9 billion per year.
- Smokers are 29 percent more likely to have annual medical insurance claims over \$5,000 than nonsmokers.
- Smoking during pregnancy costs the country more than \$3 billion a year

Work Cost\$

- Premature retirements and deaths caused by smoking have cost the country at least \$60 billion in lost wages per year.
- Smokers with group life insurance push up premiums for nonsmokers in the same pool by \$4 billion a year.
- Every smoker costs his or her company at least \$1,000 a year because of decreased productivity and increased health care costs.
- Smokers are more likely to be hurt at work than nonsmokers.

Fire Cost\$

- Cigarettes are the leading cause of fire fatalities in the United States.
- Twenty-eight percent of all residential fire deaths were caused by smoking materials.

- Smoking is the second-leading cause of injuries related to household fires, ranking second only to injuries caused by cooking-equipment fires. In 1992, the loss in property from smoking-related fires totaled \$318 million.

Family Cost\$

- A new study shows that parental smoking each year kills at least 6,200 children
- Smoking causes 5.4 million children serious ailments such as ear infection and asthma
- In at least the fifteen states where the issue has been raised, courts have held that it is appropriate to consider whether a parent smokes around a child in determining whether they should be awarded custody. States which have rules that parental smoking around a child may be considered in custody proceedings include: California, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.
- People who smoke are more likely to be involved in car crashes for which they are responsible.

Military Cost\$

- The military spends \$930 million per year on healthcare for smoking-related illnesses and lost productivity
- A recent study of just active duty Air Force members below age 36 shows that service spends \$107 million a year to treat smokers and for lost time due to smoke breaks. The study assumed "a conservative estimate" of three 10-minute smoke breaks a day. That's how much it would cost to employ 3,537 people for a year, about the number on an average-sized Air Force base.

Navy Cost\$ at NTC

Let me close with some “true confessions” from recent successful quitters who have attended the quit program here at Great Lakes.

- One quitter related that two weeks after being quit, he was more productive at work, getting about 2 hours more work done each day. He also said he was more efficient and felt better on the job.
- Returning Fleet sailors, (who have recently quit) stated that they would spend 2 to 3 hours per day just standing in line to smoke at the ship’s designated smoking area.
- Perhaps the most interesting “confession” came from an instructor at Service School who stated that he used to give longer breaks to his students because of his smoking habit. Now that he has quit, he has cut his breaks and now has more productive class time to teach needed technical skills.

It is imperative that we continue down the road to a tobacco free Navy and military as well. Help is available, free of charge, for all active duty members, their spouses, and retirees in quitting their tobacco habits. Make the **Great American Smokeout, Thursday 16 November**, your day to commit to quit. If you have any questions or desire help in quitting your tobacco habit, contact the **Wellness Center** at 688-2617 or the **Fisher Dental Clinic** at 688-3331 for help. Again, the **Great American Smokeout** is just around the corner and we are standing by to help with your commitment to quit your smoked or smokeless habit. Remember: *Don’t wait for the health effects of tobacco to make you quit, because tobacco cost\$ you each day you use it.*